

The effective date of the Brandenburg patent is July 10, 1996. Applicants submit herewith the Rule 131 declaration of inventors Dillard and Goddard establishing an actual reduction to practice of the invention prior to July 10, 1996. All dates redacted from the Dillard and Goddard declaration are prior to July 10, 1996. Claims 3-22 are therefore allowable.

5 **Applicant's election to overcome the Brandenburg reference with a Rule 131**
 declaration at this time is not an acquiescence to the basis for the Examiner's rejection of the claims.
 Applicant reserves the right to argue the merits of the rejection at any later date.

CONCLUSION

10 The claims now being in form for allowance, reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has questions or wishes to discuss any aspect of the case, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number given below.

15 Respectfully submitted,

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